

Documents on Diplomacy: Lessons

Saving Your Neighbor's House: Lend Lease

Standard: I. Culture
V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
VII. Production, Distribution, and Consumption
VIII. Science, Technology, and Society
IX. Global Connections
X. Civic Ideals and Practices

Grade Level: 9–12

Objectives: The student will:

- Explain in class discussion the dilemma that FDR found himself in between U.S. policy and Churchill's requests for aid
- Collect historical information on FDR and Churchill during the 1940s
- Analyze what history says about the Atlantic Charter and Lend Lease
- Cite references from their own historical research when they add their own paragraphs to the list of historical samplings

Time: 1 class period, plus homework

Materials: Documents: **1941** *Lend Lease*
1941 *The Atlantic Charter*

Exercises: *Historical Peculiarities*

History textbooks and old textbooks from parents
Highlighters for each student's use

Procedures:

Setting the Stage

In the years since World War II, there has been a great deal of historical analysis of the relationship between Franklin Roosevelt and Winston Churchill and of their interaction as the crisis with Hitler grew. A "sampler" of historical views is provided with this lesson to show students the extent of the interpretations over several decades. FDR liked to handle his own foreign policy and liked to use his own close associates—rather than State Department diplomats—as his personal envoys. In this lesson, students will review the sampler and the primary source documents and then analyze what historians say about these key moments.

Pre-Lesson

1. Before the lesson, post for homework this question:

Why didn't President Franklin Roosevelt use Secretary of State Cordell Hull in his secret exchanges with British Prime Minister Winston Churchill?

Ask them to find out if their parents/guardians still have their old history textbooks at home and, if so, what those texts say about the two leaders. Bring examples to the next class along with the references of where they found the information.

Day One

1. Discuss with students what they would do if their neighbor's house caught on fire? What would they do if there was a serious crisis in their neighborhood?
2. Ask students to share what—if anything—they found in their parents' old textbooks or their own textbooks about the two leaders. The teacher should either write the responses on the board or have different students record the comments so that the teacher can conduct the discussion. (Volunteers will be plentiful.) Why didn't President Roosevelt send Secretary of State Hull on any of the secret missions?
3. Distribute the resource, *Historical Peculiarities*, and ask them to read and make further notes about these two leaders.
4. Ask them to explain what they have discovered from these samples. What have they learned about the Atlantic Charter and the Lend Lease program? List their "discoveries" on the board or overhead.
5. Distribute the two documents and ask them to read quietly and make more notes on key terms in the documents. Look for generalities and overall key phrases that might get the United States into war. Write these on the documents or underline with a highlighter.
6. Ask students to share what they recorded and again write the responses on the board or overhead. Then ask them to list the key points of each document. Put those, too, on the board. (The board should now be full of student ideas and responses.)
7. Using all of these ideas, ask them to add two more segments to the historical peculiarities "sampler." Give them the rest of the period to finish parts "H" and "I" with references.
8. Part "J" will be an analytical paragraph on the importance of the two documents in the history of foreign policy. Students could use their own textbooks as a reference. If time is short, students may complete this paragraph as homework. That would also give them more time to analyze the day's lesson.

9. Collect the papers, review, and return with comments as soon as possible.

Extension Activities:

This lesson could be a preparatory exercise before students write a full historical essay on the interpersonal diplomacy of FDR and Churchill and/or how the Atlantic Charter and the Lend Lease programs were presented to the American public. ■